

MAY 16, 2018

Uncle Goat Whiskers chose the northern part of the country to go to college. We never did know why he went to a strange place like Boston, then he could have gone to some unstrange place like Austin, Texas or a business college over in San Angelo.

Old man Whiskers, as I've told you before, didn't do a lot of explaining as to how he ran his personal business. Had he been in charge of writing the instructions on electric doors, people would have had to guess which one to push or pull.

Anyhow, while Uncle Goat Whiskers was off to college he cultivated and kept a good compadre from Boston for the rest of his life. After Uncle Whiskers passed on, Goat Whiskers the Younger and myself sort of inherited this friendship.

From time to time, we have received letters from Boston well penned messages that contained the wit and humor that had held two men together for so many years.

Before the last primary election in Texas, our Boston friend sent a proposal to reform all election laws. His idea is that since voters are allowed to vote against school bonds, prohibition, and women's rights, they should also be allowed to vote against politicians.

His explanation was that citizens would tear off their shoe soles going to the polls if they were granted the opportunity to display how much they disliked most of the worthies who run for office. Further, he said that politicians receiving a certain amount of the negative votes should be punished by having their pictures hung upside down in every post office in the country for the rest of their lives.

I really took to his idea. On the same day that his letter came, a right slick magazine published an article by a super slick writer about a Congressional candidate who had made a campaign trip through the Shortgrass Country. The essence of the story was that the candidate was having to be very careful that he didn't offend my people by allowing them to know how much college education he had.

I was astounded to learn that an old boy who had been raised between San Antonio and Austin would have such a surplus of knowledge and wisdom that he'd be out of place in Mertzon or San Angelo. Most of the time, we think about being short on top, not long up there. We are apt to place a great deal of value on an hombre who has nurtured his brain on something besides the pro-football league and the home run records for the year.

In fact, I've spent most of my life hoping that I'd find some herder out here that I could outsmart on a deal. It never was my purpose to go around looking for dumb congressmen. It seemed to me that we had enough of that kind as it was. But here this old boy was afraid that is we found out he had a Ph.D.. we might write in a hog caller or a dog catcher on the ballot.

Last year when calf prices were high and the rains were good, there were plenty of us who thought we were so smart that we could have written the almanac without using a reference book. That would have been an opportunity for the politician to campaign without being self conscious. However, he may be right about us not feeling so bright now. Minus 40 cent a pound calves on today's overhead won't make anyone very cocky.

I sure like my Boston friend's election reform plan. Also, I am looking forward to seeing how our politician does in the run-off primary under the strain of concealing how smart he is.

Maybe if he stays out of the Shortgrass Country he can relax and be himself. One thing for sure, he ought to have a lot of appeal around the libraries and the colleges. That is, if they too don't learn that what's on paper isn't always the same on the ground.